



POLICY & REGULATION



Evers Signs WCMA Rural Capital Access Bill Into Law

WCMA applauded Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers for signing [Senate Bill 219](#) into law on Monday, November 25, expanding access to capital for rural business owners, including dairy manufacturers and processors.

Authored by Senator Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green), Senator Janet Bewley (D-Mason), Representative Gary Tauchen (R-Bonduel), and Representative Don Vruwink (D-Milton), Senate Bill 219 was unanimously approved by both houses of the Wisconsin State Legislature. WCMA staff thank members who joined in our advocacy efforts, especially: Paul Scharfman of Specialty Cheese Company, Debbie Crave of Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, and Collin Dean of Meister Cheese Company.

Conceived by Wisconsin Dairy Task Force 2.0 members, this new law launches a pilot program at the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). Using existing funds available through the Agribusiness Guarantee Program, \$3 million in loan guarantee authority will now be directed each year to rural development projects, including brick-and-mortar investments, equipment and machinery, marketing, and working capital. The pilot will guarantee up to 25 percent of a loan, or \$750,000, whichever is less. The borrower is required to pay back the entirety of the loan, with a state commitment only coming into play in the event of a default. All borrowers will be subject to rigorous vetting to participate in the program.

Contact WCMA staff with any questions you may have, and watch for more information on how you can apply for WHEDA loan guarantee support in upcoming e-newsletters!

WDATCP Grant Applications Due December 13

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection is accepting applications now through Friday, December 13 for [2020 Dairy Processor Grants](#).

This program offers support of up to \$50,000 to dairy processors in Wisconsin to help facilitate operational changes, improve profitability, and foster innovation and economic growth. A list of 2019 recipients and brief summaries of their projects is [available here](#).

Note that matching funds are required at 20 percent of the grant request. Funds are awarded based on a competitive review process. To learn more and download the application form, [click here](#).



Evers Visits WCMA Member Eau Galle Cheese Factory

WCMA member Eau Galle Cheese Factory welcomed Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers to its production facility in Durand on Friday, November 22 for a tour and discussion of dairy industry challenges and opportunities.” Our thanks go to WCMA First Vice President Steve Bechel for hosting Gov. Evers and for representing cheesemakers so well.

Learn more about the visit, and how WCMA engaged with the Evers Administration in 2019, in this [news release on WisCheeseMakers.org](#).

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

USMCA

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

House Democrats Signal USMCA Vote in 2020

House Democrats, led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi, noted this week that a vote to finalize the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement may not occur until early 2020, citing ongoing concerns over prescription drug pricing and environmental practices though noting they are "within range" of an agreement. WCMA and national dairy organizations continue to urge ratification as soon as possible to secure business between America and our two largest international dairy markets. Mexico has already ratified the agreement, though Canada has not.

For more on international trade developments, see these news stories.

- *Washington Post*: [Trump, Pelosi blame each other for delay in finalizing trade deal with Canada, Mexico](#)
- *MarketWatch*: [Trump calls Pelosi 'incapable' of setting up a vote on USMCA](#)
- *CNBC*: [House Democrats are 'within range' of reaching a USMCA trade deal, Pelosi says](#)
- *Agri-Pulse*: [Pelosi: USMCA vote could slip into 2020](#)
- *Politico*: [Freshman Democrats skeptical about USMCA deal by year's end](#)
- *Reuters*: [No 'phase two' U.S.-China deal on the horizon, officials say](#)
- *Bloomberg*: [Japan's lower house approves Trump trade deal](#)
- *The Columbian*: [Is this American cheese's moment?](#)

MAKING HEADLINES

- *Reuters*: [China Mengniu Dairy to buy a second Australian dairy firm for \\$407 million from Kirin](#)
- *CNN Business*: [America's milk industry is struggling. Don't blame oat milk.](#)
- *Kansas City Business Journal*: [Dean Foods bondholders stand in the way of quick sale to DFA](#)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [DFA has 173 million reasons to acquire Dean Foods assets](#)
- *VinePair*: [The future of cheese in America requires cultural and capital investment](#) (Featuring Uplands Cheese)
- *Dairy Herd Management*: [High U.S. cheese prices could pressure milk prices in 2020](#)
- *Considerable*: [Wisconsin found yet another amazing use for cheese](#) [brine on roads]
- *Feedstuffs*: [Ag immigration bill advances out of committee](#)
- *USA Today*: [Vilsack endorses Joe Biden for President](#)

- *Jezebel*: [Cheese boards are Instagram's Jello-O molds](#)
- *Bustle*: [Costco's cheese flight is back; it's the perfect holiday snack](#) (Featuring Cabot Cooperative Creamery, Schuman Cheese)
- *Smithsonian*: [This cheese's secret ingredient comes from caves on volcanic hillsides](#)
- *KRTV-TV*: [Commissioners take action on Big Sky Cheese proposal](#)
- *USA Today*: [Kraft Heinz recalls cottage cheese for plastic, metal bits](#)
- *USA Today*: [Nabisco recalls Cheese Nips because they may contain plastic pieces](#)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING



CDR Construction Advances as Deadline is Set for Final Financing Plan

The construction of the new Center for Dairy Research at Babcock Hall took another positive step forward November 8 when a large group of stakeholders set an aggressive timeline to develop completed design and utility audit goals to reach a final, defensible cost for this complex project by mid-January 2020.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration has hired construction specialists Gilbane Building Co. as an “owner’s representative” to add skills capacity and scheduling expertise to the project, joining general contractor CD Smith, sanitary process equipment provider MP&C and Zimmerman architects. Engaging an owner’s representative was one of the recommendations from Hill International’s third-party review of the project that was completed earlier this fall. Industry representatives on this stakeholders committee pushed for the Hill review, with special thanks to Tom Hedge, with Foth, for recommending Hill and Gilbane to UW and state leaders.

With completed plans and budgets in January, the University of Wisconsin System can approach its Board of Regents with a financing plan to close the final budget gap for this project. If that approval is won, this financing plan would move to the Wisconsin State Building Commission for final approval. WCMA will seek to engage members in building legislative support for this final financing package this winter.



WCMA SCHOLARSHIPS

\$15,000 in Student Support to be Awarded in 2020

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) is **now accepting applications** for five student scholarships worth a total of \$15,000. Applications are due by February 19, 2020.

Two students will be awarded the **WCMA Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship**, worth \$3,000 each. Any employee or child of an employee of a WCMA dairy manufacturing, processing, or marketing member company may apply.

Employees or children of employees at WCMA supplier member companies may apply for the **WCMA Cheese Industry Supplier Student Scholarship**. Three students will receive scholarship awards of \$3,000 each.

Application forms may be found at WisCheeseMakers.org, or can be requested directly from **WCMA Office & Member Service Manager Sara Schmidt**. **Share this poster** in your breakroom or email it to alert employees to this opportunity.

WCMA COMMITTEES



WCMA Workforce Committee Meets at Grande Cheese

WCMA's Workforce Committee met on Thursday, November 19 at Grande Cheese Company's corporate headquarters in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin to discuss improvements to our annual wage and benefits survey and job fair, discuss the development of an online jobs board and industry

promotional videos, and much more!

We thank our generous hosts at Grande Cheese Company as well as our engaged committee members from Agropur, Alpine Slicing & Cheese Conversion, Associated Milk Producers, Inc., Baker Cheese Factory, Cheese Louise, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Emmi Roth USA, Great Lakes Cheese Company, Foremost Farms USA, Lactalis, M3 Insurance, Maple Leaf Cheese, Masters Gallery Foods, Meister Cheese Company, Nelson-Jameson, Inc., Sartori Company, Wapsie Valley Creamery, Westby Cooperative Creamery, and Winona Foods.

Want to get involved? You're welcome to join the Workforce Committee at any time; simply contact [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).

EVENT BRIEFS

We value your engagement in WCMA activities. Here's a brief look at our upcoming calendar:

- November 28-29: WCMA Offices Closed for Thanksgiving
- December 11: WCMA Board of Directors Meeting
- December 17: [WDATCP Hearing on rBST Rule Change](#)
- January 14: [Deadline to Register for CheeseExpo 2020 Best-Value Rates](#)
- January 15: [WCMA Policy Committee Meeting](#)
- January 31: [Deadline to Enter 2020 World Championship Cheese Contest](#)

WCMA is proud to promote opportunities for training and enrichment hosted by our partners in industry. Consider these events:

- December 10-12: [Membrane Filtered Milk for Cheesemaking Short Course | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- January 7-8: [Milk Pasteurization Short Course | Center for Dairy Research](#)
- January 9-March 19: [Certificate in Dairy Processing Short Course | Center for Dairy Research](#)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

WCMA is pleased to welcome two new dairy manufacturer/processor members and nine new supplier members to our organization this week:

- [Ace Sanitary](#)
- [Anderson Dahlen, Inc.](#)
- [Antares Vision](#)
- [Calico Cottage](#)
- [Flexxray](#)
- [FT System](#)
- McFinn Technologies
- North Star Dairy Sales
- [Tauber](#)
- [Wakker Cheese](#)
- Xiamen DE-Filter New Material Co., Ltd.

Thank you for your support of WCMA. For membership information, please contact [WCMA Office and Member Services Manager Sara Schmidt](#).

STAY CONNECTED

Thanks for subscribing to WCMA's weekly electronic communications, which focus in alternating weeks on industry news and industry events.

WCMA extends this benefit to all member employees; let us know if we should [add your colleagues](#) to our mailing list.

To share feedback on WCMA's new newsletter format or content, please contact [WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney](#).

WisCheeseMakers.org

